Chapter 1

How Speaking Will Drive Revenue

As an entrepreneur I've noticed that there are mainly three results that you'll want from your business. The first is income. You cannot escape the fact that if you are in a for-profit business, generating income must be at the top or close to the top of your list. If your business doesn't generate income, you don't have a business—you have an expensive hobby. My experience, through working with thousands of coaches, course creators, and entrepreneurs around the world, is that as much as they genuinely want to make an impact in people's lives, if they aren't making money, making the business sustainable is impossible.

So often, people shy away from the fact that they want to make money. Many people secretly wish they could make more money but don't want to share that publicly because they feel like it's being selfish. I want to give you permission to have an internal drive for income. For me, making money genuinely makes me excited because money represents that the marketplace finds what I am bringing to be valuable.

The second thing people want to create is influence. You probably have a desire in your heart to influence people so that they too can reach their potential. Many of my clients, especially in the expert space, have personally been through a transformation or journey, and they have a desire to influence others so that they too can experience this type of breakthrough.

The final drive for most people is that they want to leave an impact. I tend to attract a lot of heart-centered entrepreneurs, and you are probably one of them. You feel a deep desire to not just make money or a name for yourself but to truly impact people's lives. At the end of most guest episodes on my podcast called *The Expert Edge*, I ask my guests a question that goes something like this: "Imagine it is the end of your life and people are standing around reflecting on what you represented to them. These people are your family, friends, clients, and colleagues. What would be your hope that they would be whispering about you and what you represented in their life?"

Inevitably, almost every time, people speak of the hope that those standing around reflecting on their life would say they made an impact, that they felt loved by them, and that they represented what it looks like to live a life of possibility. I wonder what would be your hope at the end of your life—what would you want people to be whispering about what you represented to them? So often, when I'm delivering a large presentation, I reflect on the idea that when I'm 90 years old, I would love to look back on my life and feel like I represented a path to possibility, that I allowed people to step into their full potential. That is what this book is about for me. The reason I'm writing this is so that when all is said and done, you will always have something available to you that could show you a path to step into your potential. Based on these drives, let's now explore the three pillars for making your speaking business generate high income, have huge influence, and leave a big impact on the world.

Choose Your Audience Wisely

The first pillar of running a successful business is choosing the right audience and knowing them more intimately than they even know themselves. I was about four years into my speaking business and remember going through a period of months when I didn't have much work. Looking at my calendar, I had only one or two speaking engagements, which meant I had a big gap between what I wanted to make that month and what I was actually making.

I opened my email and saw an inquiry from someone asking if I would be willing to speak at one of their conferences. I followed up on the inquiry, and in the discussion, the event organizer shared that they didn't have much of a budget for speakers. When I told them my speaker fee, they said they couldn't afford it but maybe could hire me for a future conference. Remember, I was in a place of desperation, so I said to the event organizer I was willing to do this speaking engagement for half of my regular speaking fee.

When I shared this, he was really excited and said they would love to have me present. I then said to him, "I've recently created an online course that couples beautifully with the presentation I'm delivering. I was wondering if you would be open to sharing that course with the conference in light of me reducing my speaker fee." For context, at this point, I had never sold a product directly from the stage. I had only ever made offers where people could book a free consultation or download some sort of helpful PDF or guide.

The event organizer thought about it for a minute and said that would be great, suggesting we share some of the revenue generated from the course sales as a win-win. We agreed on the concept, and they booked me to present. Leading up to this event, I was really nervous about how this would go. In fact, I thought I'd made a really bad decision to cut my speaker fee because I had no sense of certainty that I would make money from the course offering.

I discussed with the event organizer what I now call a "collaborative close." Essentially, he would come up, congratulate me for the presentation, and then introduce the idea that I had an online course that complemented the presentation. This type of close is really powerful because it takes the pressure off you as the speaker for introducing the course or product.

I had a 30-minute keynote spot. I remember walking on stage and first seeing they'd loaded the wrong slide deck and then noticing the slides weren't showing correctly on the screen. I did all I could to stay calm in front of the audience of about 800 people. I gave the best presentation I could for 30 minutes, and then, at the end, the event organizer came up and started the collaborative close. He thanked me for my time, asked the audience if they found it valuable, and then mentioned my online course that coupled with the presentation content. He passed it to me to share about the course and the special offer for the conference.

I shared details about the course, who it was for, the outcomes, specific modules, and bonuses available, and then shared the special price. I asked the audience members who resonated with my topic to visit a specific URL where they could join the course and get this special offer, available only for people attending the conference in the next 24 hours. The event organizer thanked me again for the presentation; I waved to the audience and stepped off the stage.

As I sat down in the green room, I started to notice a vibration in my pocket. It was my phone, and when I pulled it out, I could see payment notifications showing up on my screen. In complete disbelief, these payment notifications started to come through faster and faster. In the first 10 minutes, about 15 people joined the course; then in the next 30 minutes, about 20 more people joined. Over the next 24 hours, we ended up generating more than $90,000 in course sales. This completely blew my mind. Remember, I had taken this speaking opportunity at a discount rate and was kicking myself for doing that because I hated discounting myself. But what ended up happening was that I made about eight times my regular keynote fee in sales of my online course. This was one of the first times I realized that speaking for a fee was not the best way to generate revenue in my business—it was speaking either for free or for a lower fee with an agreement that I was allowed to make an offer.

To say that I was excited about what had just happened is an understatement. However, I was about to have a rude awakening because several months later, I had an opportunity to speak at an event with a very different audience. I delivered the same presentation to a room of about 250 people. Based on my previous experience, I calculated that I would probably make between $20,000 to $30,000. I did my presentation and made my offer, but this time, I only ended up making $2,000.

I was lost because I didn't understand why; I delivered the same presentation and made the same offer, but I made significantly less money based on the ratio of people present. This was my first lesson in understanding the power of the audience. The audience you choose or end up in front of will determine at least 50% of your success. You can have the most incredible presentation and most irresistible offer, but if you're standing in front of the wrong audience, you'll make very little money. I share this story because who you choose as your audience is one of the most important decisions you'll make as an entrepreneur.

Just recently, I was having a coaching conversation with one of my clients in our group coaching program, and we were discussing that she should elevate her avatar. This meant she should consider focusing on an ideal audience who had more access to resources. I didn't tell her she had to completely abandon her current audience, but we discussed that if she focused more on an audience that had the access and ability to make decisions to join our program, she could make more money. Doing this changed everything because it allowed her to keep her current price and also work with people who had the money to join her program.

Does the audience you're focusing on have the resources to join your program? If you're finding that the offers you're making are extremely inconsistent in how they're selling, it could be an audience problem, not an offer problem. Choose an audience that has the resources and ability to join your program. When you do this, even in economic downturns, they will still have the resources and ability to buy your offerings. These decisions will help you weather economically slow markets and usually result in a better quality experience for you as an entrepreneur because you start attracting more resourceful people.

Develop a Signature Talk

The next element of the equation is building a signature talk that connects with your ideal audience and naturally moves them toward wanting to work with you. Knowing how to structure a presentation that takes your ideal audience on a journey toward greater levels of commitment is the secret to building a high-converting signature talk.

One of the big mistakes people make when building their signature talk is trying to include content that will impress the audience. As human beings, we have a natural desire to be liked. Because of this need, we tend to put content in our presentations that we believe will make the audience think we are either smart, savvy, or successful. The problem with this is that you'll end up creating content that either confuses your audience or overwhelms them with too much information.

Many of the presentations you've attended have probably felt like drinking from a fire hose. It's like going to an all-you-can-eat buffet—at the end, how do you feel? Sick, right? You regret eating so much and feel terrible. A great presentation should feel like an elegant meal. It should be constructed in a way where each idea flows beautifully with the questions or stories you tell. It should have a clear theme and result in the audience feeling fulfilled enough to know they received great information, but not to the point where they feel overwhelmed.

The goal of a presentation that gets you clients is to increase the audience's commitment to the goals they already have. Your presentation should awaken the desires your audience already has for their life and motivate them to take action right now.

One of the problems is that most presentations you have experienced have been information-based, like those from school or college. These presentations are great in an academic environment; however, they are usually emotionally dry in their content, resulting in overwhelm because you're trying to digest too much information. Obviously, I'm generalizing because there are incredible lecturers out there, and I've experienced a few of them, but this is the general experience most of my students describe to me. And it's from this paradigm that most of you will try to create your presentations. You'll focus on cramming in as much content as possible within your allotted time, trying to prove to the audience that you really know what you're talking about. The problem is that in doing so, you're also going to destroy any chances of making a sale.

What tends to happen when you do this is the audience leaves feeling overwhelmed, thinking they have 17 things they need to do before they can even consider joining your program. This happens because you've likely already given them too many action items to tackle.

Ultimately, a presentation that gets you clients should leave your audience with just one action: to take the next step that you offer. Any other action becomes a distraction from them achieving their goal in the fastest way possible, which is through your offer.

Listen carefully because what I'm about to say will change the direction of your life and ideally increase the amount of money you've ever made: a high-converting presentation is designed to help the audience make a decision. The thing most people avoid in their life is making decisions. Decisions are scary because they feel final—they feel like you're cutting off something and heading into a new arena. That's because, on some level, you are. A decision requires you to cut off old ways of thinking, behaving, and acting, and asks you to step into a new way of being.

Essentially, that's what you'll be asking your audience to do. If you make a direct offer, which I call a Sharp Sell, you're asking your audience to make a commitment to change through the offer you're making. This is really scary for your audience because not only are you asking them to make a decision, but you're also asking them to invest in themselves and essentially back themselves to believe they will make a change. The process you're going to take the audience through in your presentation will be touching their hearts, shifting their minds, equipping their hands, and moving their feet. This is the structure that you'll learn throughout this book, and I trust it will change your business and your life.

The great news is that you don't need lots of different signature talks. In fact, I've usually found that most people, including myself, need only one signature talk to get the business breakthrough they've always desired.

Sometimes, we try to get too fancy and come up with new angles and presentations every time we launch the same product. The problem with that is that you're going to get inconsistent results. So, I want you to stop trying to be fancy and start focusing on building one presentation that will get you clients for life. Sometimes people say to me that sounds a little bit boring delivering the same presentation. But can I let you in on a secret? Profitable businesses are usually boring. Profitable businesses are predictable and consistent. If having a pile of cash in the bank, lots of happy customers, and knowing that every time you present, you'll get more clients is boring, I'll take boring every day.

Create an Irresistible Offer

The third pillar you'll need to understand is the power of your offer. Your offer is the program you deliver to help your audience get their desired result. You'll usually make your offer at the end of your presentation. If you do this the right way, you'll get a good percentage of your audience either raising their hands or giving you their credit card details to take the next step excitedly.

Depending on the context, you'll either be:

- Asking your audience to sign up directly and join your paid offer
- Inviting them to book a call with you or your team members to discuss their situation and if they are a good fit for the next step
- Offering a free resource like a PDF, guide, or training in exchange for their personal details

As a rule of thumb, you should always ask permission from the event organizer to make an offer. Obviously, if you're hosting your own presentation for your own audience, you have complete freedom to make whatever offer you desire. That type of situation is my favorite because it gives you full freedom. But if you're speaking at an event that is a collaboration of other people's audiences or you've been invited to present at someone else's conference, you must always ask permission. Your offer should be the logical next step after hearing your signature presentation and should align directly with your ideal audience's existing desires.

The secret to building a highly profitable business is finding an audience you like working with and who can afford to pay you, building a signature talk that naturally moves them toward wanting to take up your offer. Your offer should deliver on its promises, which will result in goodwill, great reviews, and consistent referrals. This synergy of your audience, signature talk, and offer will create momentum like you've never experienced before.